

Miami-Dade County
Corrections and Rehabilitation Department

CHAPLAINCY SERVICES BUREAU



Volunteer Manual

A GUIDE FOR FAITH BASED VOLUNTEERS



Delivering Excellence Every Day

Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department Mission Statement

We, the Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department serve our community by providing safe, secure and humane detention of individuals in our custody while preparing them for a successful return to the community.

Chaplaincy Services Bureau Vision Statement

Our vision is to prepare inmates for a successful return to their community before they are released by providing a place of worship for them and their families, employment, and an opportunity to further their education or vocation.

Purpose

This manual has information about becoming a volunteer and the requirements. Read this manual so you will understand what you can expect and what is expected of you. It will familiarize you with prohibited acts and disciplinary actions, which may be taken. If you do not follow these rules, administrative/disciplinary and/or criminal action may be taken against you. If you do not understand information in the Volunteer Manual, you are encouraged to ask MDCR personnel for assistance.

The information described within this handbook may change from time to time with or without notice.

Message from the Director

Every day the Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation (MDCR) Department relies on volunteers to achieve the vital work of restoring inmates to social and spiritual health, so that ultimately they become productive citizens in the community. This great work is made possible by the labor of love our faithful volunteers offer — compassionate people who have learned that it is more precious to give than to receive. These are the “Everyday Heroes” who come from all walks of life that offer their time and talent to those in need. Every one of you has something special to contribute, and I offer my sincere thanks for your dedication and commitment in changing lives.



MDCR needs your help, so together we can continue to accomplish MDCR's great mission of serving our community by providing safe, secure and humane detention of individuals in our custody while preparing them for a successful return to the community. Our population in the jails has special needs and a burning desire to be unconditionally loved. Only by the sacrificial devotion and love of our volunteers are the inmates regenerated and so radically transformed in their inner soul that “the old is gone, the new has come!” — which impacts this generation, and the generations to come. Faith offers healing, not only for the inmates who are being helped by volunteers, but also for their family members.

Together in loving service, we are restoring hope, changing lives, and uniting families. Thank you for helping Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department fulfill its mission. We could not do it without you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy P. Ryan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Timothy P. Ryan, Director
Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department

Message from the Commander of the Chaplaincy Services Bureau



I have seen through the years thousands of volunteers come through our facilities and not only have an impact on the inmates and their families, but also on the lives of the staff who work behind the bars and gates of the Miami Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department. You have shown your compassion and the power of love, by reaching and touching the lives of those you serve.

Our purpose and mission is the greatest cause in the world, a cause that is not only impacting lives and generations in this life, but also for eternity. Like the greatest servant who ever lived said, "I did not come to be served, but to serve". For it is in loving service that we receive the fulfillment we long for, and when we love our neighbors as ourselves, we honor the great commandment.

As we come together to serve and meet the inmates at the point of their greatest need, we are reminded that we need each other to accomplish this great mission.

Looking forward to working together, making a difference in the lives of those we serve and in the communities we live in. May God Bless your efforts and your sacrificial giving to this cause of changing lives.

Thank you for your loving service.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jose E.", followed by a long horizontal stroke.

Jose E. Hernandez, Commander
Chaplaincy Services Bureau

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	4
II.	Recruitment of Volunteers	4
III.	Qualifications for Volunteering	4
IV.	How to Volunteer: The Process.....	5
V.	Working As A Volunteer	6
VI.	Volunteer Protocol.....	7
VII.	The Faith-Based Program Inside	7
	A. Faith-Based	8
	B. Faith-Based Study.....	8
	C. One-On-One Faith-Based Visit.....	8
	D. One-On-One Counseling.....	8
	E. Family Reunification.....	9
	F. Catwalk Ministry.....	9
	G. Faith Works Re-Entry Program.....	9
VIII.	Medical Concerns.....	9
IX.	Visitation.....	10
X.	Violence	10
	A. Violence Protocol for Volunteers.....	10
	B. Hostage Guidelines	10
	C. Riot and Disorder Response Plan.....	11
XI.	Conclusion	11

I. INTRODUCTION

This manual is written to provide information and guidelines to assist the men and women who work as volunteers in the correctional facilities of the Miami Dade County Corrections and Rehabilitation Department under the supervision of the Chaplaincy Services Bureau. The manual can also be utilized to aid in the orientation of new volunteers or as a tool to recruit individuals who are considering volunteering their time and efforts to provide faith-based services.

We also hope that this manual will answer some of your questions about your place in the faith-based services performed daily in the various parts of our correctional facilities.

II. RECRUITMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

The Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department recruits and utilizes volunteers to provide a means of expanding activities and services in the delivery of inmate programming through the Chaplaincy and Rehabilitation Services Bureau, as well as other entities of the department.

The department recruits volunteers through community-based organizations, not-for-profit organizations, and existing volunteers.

The purpose of having volunteers is to assist the departmental chaplains in reaching the goals of the ministry within each incarcerated setting. A volunteer is an invited guest of the departmental chaplain working in cooperation with the institutional staff.

III. QUALIFICATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERING

The Department needs people who desire to provide services to inmates and/or staff. Beyond this desire and/or calling, our experience shows and the county requires that we have basic requirements to participate in faith-based services. These requirements are:

The volunteer applicant must be at least 21 years old and have a valid driver's license, or State of Florida Identification.

1. The volunteer applicant must pass a background check conducted by the department. A past misdemeanor or felony conviction involving moral turpitude or violence may disqualify the volunteer applicant for service. The volunteer applicant must advise the assigned departmental chaplain of such.
2. The volunteer applicant must demonstrate a commitment to his/her faith in the way he/she live their life.
3. The volunteer applicant must be able to express his/her faith to others. He/she should be able to discuss his/her faith with some ability.
4. The volunteer applicant must have a written reference from his/her pastor or leader in the house of worship; and must be a member in good standing with a house of worship for at least one year.

IV. HOW TO VOLUNTEER: THE PROCESS

The steps toward becoming a Volunteer are:

1. The volunteer applicant must check to see if his/her qualifications meet the requirements to become a volunteer.
2. The volunteer applicant must talk to his/her faith-based leader.
3. The volunteer applicant must read the volunteer manual.
4. The volunteer applicant must complete all sections on the volunteer application and submit the completed application to the assigned departmental chaplain in whose area he/she wish to be involved, along with the following: A valid Driver License or Florida Identification Card, signed Non-Staff Volunteer Application, and a reference letter of good standing from his/her house of worship leader.
5. The Chaplaincy Services Bureau will review and verify the accuracy of personal information submitted on the volunteer application.
6. The Chaplaincy Services Bureau Commander will sign off on the volunteer application package.
7. The Chaplaincy Services Bureau will submit the completed volunteer application package to the department's Security Operations Unit for a criminal background check.
8. Once the volunteer application has been accepted, it will be reviewed by the Security Operations Captain. The applicant will be contacted by Security Operations Unit personnel and an appointment will be scheduled to have the applicant's photograph taken and a Non-Staff pass prepared for approval.
9. The volunteer pass and completed application will be forwarded to the affected facility supervisor for final approval.
10. If the volunteer application is disapproved, the Security Operations Unit will keep the original application and send a copy of the application to the Chaplaincy Services Bureau and the affected facility supervisor for their information and records.
11. The Chaplaincy Services Bureau will contact the volunteer applicant and notify him/her that the application was approved or disapproved. If the application is approved the volunteer applicant will be asked to obtain the volunteer pass from the affected facility supervisor.
12. The volunteer applicant must attend an 8 hour orientation and training prior to his/her assignment.
13. Volunteers renewing their volunteer passes must resubmit a copy of a valid Driver License or Florida Identification card.
14. The volunteer applicant must attend all mandatory training and meetings at the request of the Chaplaincy Services Bureau, departmental chaplain, and/or volunteer chaplain.
15. After the first year, the volunteer applicant must attend a yearly mandatory meeting to keep abreast of the department and Chaplaincy Services Bureau policy and procedures.
16. On a semi-annual (every 6 months) basis a local and national criminal records check will be conducted of all current volunteers by Security Operations.

V. WORKING AS A VOLUNTEER

INSIDE: Security Rules and Regulations

The Miami Dade County Corrections and Rehabilitation Department invites the volunteers to do ministry and as an invited guest, the volunteer must work harmoniously with staff and follow all rules and regulations without exception. Any violation of these rules and regulations may result in termination from the Volunteer Program. These requirements are:

1. Wear your facility identification pass (ID) while you are in the facility.
2. Comply with all orders from staff. There is an element of danger in any correctional facility and certain requests from staff may be for your own safety.
3. Never carry anything unauthorized in or out of the facility. This is considered contraband. It may be illegal by law or expressly prohibited by those legally charged with the administration and operation of the facility or program. Even the most innocent request to carry an item in or out for an inmate may involve you and our faith-based program in the commission of a crime.
4. Clear all items you bring in or out through the chaplain. All printed handouts must be approved.
5. Do not provide food, sharp objects, pens, pins, pencils, money or any other products to the inmates.
6. Never pass anything from one inmate to another — including verbal greetings. Again, what seems innocent may not be so innocent.
7. Do not make or receive telephone calls for inmates.
8. Do not give legal, medical or psychological advice.
9. Do not take favors or gifts from inmates.
10. Bring official identification to be checked against the computer list at the entry point. Please leave purses, cellular telephones and pagers outside. Do not bring anything that can be used as a weapon.
11. Never bring an unauthorized visitor with you.
12. Do not take names, addresses or telephone numbers with you outside to divulge an inmate's name and facility is to forfeit their confidentiality. You must not divulge the name or any information about a juvenile in custody to anyone other than the facility chaplain. To do so is a violation of the law.
13. Do not divulge contents of a criminal history or arrest record.
14. Do not reveal the contents of any official Departmental report or document except as authorized by the Director or Departmental directives.
15. Do not alter, forge, destroy or tamper with any correctional record, report, citation or other Departmental document.
16. Do not give out your personal address or telephone number. If an inmate indicates an interest in contacting you on the outside, give them the chaplain's office phone number.

VI. VOLUNTEER PROTOCOL

We need to develop and maintain positive relationships with the staff and correctional officers in the facilities. Volunteers assigned to work in the various facilities are to report to the assigned departmental chaplain or the volunteer chaplain at that facility. The following protocol shall be followed in the execution of your duties.

1. Always greet the staff in each area as soon as you arrive there. Be respectful and sensitive to their job requirements and express appreciation for their assistance.
2. If a staff person denies your request, do not argue about that decision.
3. If you observe inappropriate behavior on the part of the staff or you are treated disrespectfully, please document such activity in writing and inform the chaplain immediately.
4. Do not ask the staff for any program changes. If changes need to be made, talk to the facility chaplain.
5. Be courteous and friendly toward all staff members.
6. Do not criticize the justice system or staff in the inmate's presence; this means maintaining neutrality if the inmate complains of injustice. If you think there is some basis for concern, please talk to the chaplain.
7. Keep your promise. If you say, "I'll see you next week" Be there! If your plans are uncertain, make that clear.
8. In jail, racial and gender based comments can be explosive issues. Be aware of your own prejudices in your language and behavior. These issues cause great controversy inside. In this diverse environment, you must think seriously about the consequences of your words, actions, and attitudes. We must be respectful toward all people.
9. Do not offer an inmate placement in your home.
10. As a general courtesy, if you see an ex-inmate on the outside, allow him or her to make the first advance of recognition. Try not to greet first.
11. Maintain audio or visual contact with staff at all times.
12. Avoid doing or saying anything that could cause your character to be brought under suspicion.
13. Avoid physical contact with inmates and juveniles. Physical contact, i.e. hugging can be misconstrued.
14. Do not condemn any other faith or suggest yours is the only true faith.

VII. THE FAITH-BASED PROGRAM INSIDE

The Chaplaincy Services Bureau Commander plans, directs and supervises all jail ministries/faith-based programming, as well as, working with major faith-based organizations and leaders to provide support for future volunteers and resources to serve the Miami-Dade County Corrections and Rehabilitation Department.

The departmental chaplain oversees the volunteer chaplain and other faith-based volunteers in the implementation of their duties. The departmental chaplain is responsible for spiritual/faith-based needs and concerns of inmates within their assigned facilities.

Volunteer chaplain meetings are held monthly for approximately 2 hours to discuss administrative responsibility of each facility; foster communication and community among the volunteers and to offer information and training in dealing with inmates.

The volunteer chaplain coordinates the faith-based services of each facility. The volunteer chaplain manages faith-based services, counseling and consultation to all staff and inmates who request such services. The volunteer chaplain coordinates all chaplaincy services and volunteer activities in each facility. **The volunteer chaplain must provide services to all denominations and faiths.**

The faith-based volunteer provides faith-based counseling and/or programming to inmates in the facility where they are assigned. Faith-based volunteers who serve as counselors will receive training and orientation from chaplains before they are assigned to perform counseling duties. Each volunteer is accountable to the facility chaplain where he or she serves.

There are seven general categories of services we provide and where volunteers are essential to the faith-based program.

A. Faith-Based

Each facility, where feasible, has faith-based services offered on the faith-based needs of the inmates. This is a fundamental right each inmate has. The inmates come on a voluntary basis.

B. Faith-Based Study

Each facility, where feasible, has weekly faith-based studies offered. Some facilities offer a variety of services. Check with the assigned departmental chaplain for specific details.

C. One-On-One Faith-Based Visit

Visiting Clergy - Any outside clergy person may upon request of the inmate, minor or parents visit that individual. Consistent with the facility rules and regulations, this may be a window visit or it may be a "contact" visit. Visits are arranged through the assigned departmental chaplain in accordance with the facility rules. Ongoing contact with their faith leader is encouraged as a primary support connection for when they are released.

D. One-On-One Counseling

Our counseling is geared toward spiritual concerns. All requests for counseling must be honored. Whenever an inmate requests faith-based counseling and/or guidance from a particular faith not provided by the jail faith-based programs, the chaplain/volunteer chaplain will assist the inmate with contacting such a person who will ensure their needs are met.

It is not our business to pry into family, alleged crimes, sexuality, past moral decisions, etc. However, we are dealing with the whole person and their faith relationship. As a volunteer, an individual may reveal or "confess" to you something that is troubling them. You may be a "mandated" reporter for any information you receive. You may be held accountable for what you know and when you knew it. You may even be subpoenaed to testify; clergy confidentiality does not cover you. Thus, it is necessary to set guidelines and boundaries to protect you and the inmate.

1. If a person exhibits suicidal or homicidal behavior or intentions, it must be reported immediately to sworn personnel and the departmental chaplain. This is a judgment call on your part and puts the inmate under surveillance.
2. Any knowledge of abuse — sexual or physical — must be reported to sworn personnel and the departmental chaplain immediately. Inquire carefully about whether this information has been reported to the proper authorities.
3. Any conversation dealing with abortion must be directed to the departmental chaplain (who is trained in pastoral ministries) and must not be handled by the volunteers. The stability of the inmate is of utmost concern.
4. No proselytizing in any form is permissible! This means trying to convert a person from one faith to another or to change House of Worship.

E. Family Reunification

Family Reunification Services are held at each facility allowing inmate families to come together. Participation in these services is limited to those inmates who are actively involved in faith-based programming as determined by the volunteer chaplain.

F. Catwalk Ministry

Catwalk Ministry seeks to reach those inmates who are unable to attend classes or services. A system has been implemented where teachers conduct faith-based services and provide counseling in the cells/units.

G. Faith Works Re-Entry Program

The Faith Works! Reentry Program is a transitional (re-entry) program managed by the Chaplaincy Services Bureau and exists to assist each program client with successful transition to the community through personal and spiritual transformation. The program provides job placement assistance, life skills, vocational / educational opportunities, mentors, and House of Worship or Work Release opportunities. The program also seeks to assist the families of the program clients. These services are provided through collaborative relationships with community based, non-profit organizations; as well as, other departmental entities and the Dade County Public School System.

VIII. MEDICAL CONCERNS

Inmates can carry infectious diseases, i.e. hepatitis, tuberculosis, etc. If you are sick or your immune system becomes compromised, please do not come into the facilities. Please talk to your doctor to see if you need any immunizations or if you are in good enough health to be in the facilities. If your vision, hearing or your physical mobility becomes impaired, you may not be allowed to enter the facilities. This is due to the need to be aware of emergency situations and directions as well as to quickly evacuate.

IX. VISITATION

Your security clearance cannot be used to visit family or friends. You may only be in the facilities during your authorized time, in your assigned area and may only conduct business that has been coordinated with the chaplain. If you have family or friends who are incarcerated, please notify the facility supervisor and chaplain. If one of the people in your services has been moved to another area or facility you may not see them without chaplain's authorization. Remember your clearance is only good for specific time, place and function. If you violate this, your clearance may be terminated. If your faith leader or anyone else asks you to visit someone you cannot do this, contact the chaplain.

X. VIOLENCE

The jail facilities are locations where violence and fights sometimes erupt. If a fight starts, get out of the way. Do not intervene, but find a correctional officer. You must follow the instructions of the officer. If you are told to stop what you are doing or hear the call "lock down", you must follow orders given by correctional staff and immediately leave the facilities. The officers may also lock you into a room out of the way until the situation is resolved.

A. Violence Protocol For Volunteers

Before it starts:

1. Listen to your intuition.
2. Pay attention to the body language of the inmates (clenched fists, nervous behavior, constantly looking around, facial expressions, agitation, etc.).
3. If you sense something bad is going to happen, let a staff member know or end the session immediately.

If a fight breaks out and no staff member is present:

1. Get out as quickly as possible and notify the staff immediately.
2. DO NOT try to break up the fight.
3. DO NOT watch.
4. DO NOT go back in.
5. Notify the correctional staff / chaplain immediately.

If a fight breaks out and a staff member is present:

1. DO NOT attempt to break up the fight.
2. Do exactly as a staff member instructs you.
3. Get as far away from the fight as possible and stay there until all is clear.
4. Notify the chaplain immediately.

B. Hostage Guidelines

A hostage is any person held against their will by another person for the purpose of escape, monetary gain, negotiating certain demands/agreements or for any reason which may place an individual in danger and may result in serious bodily injury or loss of life.

Any person held hostage has no authority and shall be considered under duress. Their orders must be ignored at all costs.

In the event that you are taken hostage, the following guidelines of conduct and behavior may help hostages with their given circumstances:

- a. Remain as calm as possible;
- b. Accept the situation and be prepared to wait;
- c. Maintain a low profile as close to the floor as possible;
- d. Do not speak, unless spoken to and then only when necessary;
- e. Do not agree to do anything for the captor(s) which would jeopardize anyone's life or the security of the facility;
- f. Do not antagonize or threaten the captor(s);
- g. Do not be heroic;
- h. Do not make it a point to be overly observant of criminal actions but, if possible, gain as much information as possible. Upon release, any information may be of great assistance.
- i. The initial stages of a hostage situation are the most trying. Remember if after a reasonable length of time no harm has come to you, it is a very good indication the captor(s) do not want to harm you due to hopes of a successful negotiation.

C. Riot And Disorder Response Plan

In the event a riot situation develops at any Departmental facility, procedures will be put into operation to bring rioting inmates and the area they control under our direct control with:

- j. The minimum number of injuries to visitors, staff, and inmates;
- k. The minimum amount of damage to property.

Volunteers shall not enter a disturbance area and shall comply with all orders given by correctional staff. When confronted with a situation that may escalate into a major disturbance or riot, volunteers shall retreat from the scene immediately and contact sworn personnel and advise them of the situation.

XII. CONCLUSION

Regardless of where these youth and adults are or what they have done, they are people. Try to walk a bit in their shoes. If you find yourself particularly offended or “turned off” by an inmate, see the chaplain. We are here to help and not to add to an inmate's problems.

Volunteering in a correctional setting is not easy. The rewards are not immediate. The disappointments are many. If an inmate tells you something that is disturbing to you personally — or you are feeling frustrated — please contact the staff chaplain in your area. We are here to help you serve compassionately and effectively.

Your time and talents can be used to reach troubled, hurting, and broken people.

Thank you for your interest. We hope this material will assist you in your volunteer work.

[illegible]

Carlos Alvarez

Mayor



Board of County Commissioners

Bruno Barreiro

Chairman

Barbara J. Jordan

Vice Chairwoman

Barbara J. Jordan

District 1

Katy Sorenson

District 8

Dorrin D. Rolle

District 2

Dennis C. Moss

District 9

Audrey M. Edmonson

District 3

Senator Javier D. Souto

District 10

Sally A. Heyman

District 4

Joe A. Martínez

District 11

Bruno A. Barreiro

District 5

José "Pepe" Díaz

District 12

Rebeca Sosa

District 6

Natacha Seijas

District 13

Carlos A. Gimenez

District 7

Harvey Ruvín

Clerk of Courts

George M. Burgess

County Manager

Robert A. Cuevas, Jr.

County Attorney

Timothy P. Ryan

Director

Corrections and Rehabilitation

Miami-Dade County provides equal access and equal opportunity
in employment and services and does not discriminate
on the basis of disability.

"It is the policy of Miami-Dade County to comply with all of
the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act."